UNITED NATIONS

EP

UNEP/EA.3/Res.1

Distr.: General
30 January 2018

Original: English

United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme

United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme
Third session
Nairobi, 4–6 December 2017

3/1. Pollution mitigation and control in areas affected by armed conflict or terrorism

The United Nations Environment Assembly,

Recalling United Nations General Assembly resolution 70/1, entitled "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,"

Deeply concerned about the threats to human health and the environment from pollution caused or worsened by armed conflict or terrorism,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 47/37, entitled "Protection of the environment in times of armed conflict,"

Taking note of the report of the Executive Director on progress in the implementation of resolution 2/15 on the protection of the environment in areas affected by armed conflict,[1] and its recommendations and suggested action,

Expressing its deep concern regarding environmental damage and the depletion of natural resources in the territories affected by armed conflict or terrorism,

Taking note of General Assembly resolution 50/70, entitled "General and complete disarmament"; General Assembly resolution 53/242, entitled "Report of the Secretary-General on environment and human settlements", in which the General Assembly reaffirmed that in accordance with its mandate, the United Nations Environment Programme should not become involved in conflict identification, prevention or resolution; and General Assembly resolution 57/337, entitled "Prevention of armed conflict", in which the General Assembly recognized the need for mainstreaming and coordinating the prevention of armed conflict throughout the United Nations system and called upon all its relevant organs, organizations and bodies to consider, in accordance with their respective mandates, how they could best include a conflict prevention perspective in their activities, where appropriate,

Reaffirming that while addressing pollution in areas where terrorism has occurred the United Nations Environment Programme must act within its mandate, which does not include a role in countering terrorism or the definition of terrorism, and is without prejudice to the mandate of other relevant bodies of the United Nations,

Recognizing that sustainable development and the protection of the environment contribute to human well-being and the enjoyment of human rights,

[1] UNEP/EA.3/16.

Recognizing also the need to mitigate and minimize the specific negative effects of pollution in areas affected by armed conflict or terrorism on people in vulnerable situations, including children, persons with disabilities, older persons and internally displaced persons,

Recognizing further the specific negative effects of pollution on women and girls and the need to apply a gender perspective with respect to addressing pollution resulting from armed conflict or terrorism,

Recalling its resolution 2/15, entitled "Protection of the environment in areas affected by armed conflict", in which it acknowledged the need to mitigate the environmental impact of activities of transnational and other organized criminal groups, including illegal armed groups, as well as the illegal exploitation and trade of natural resources in areas affected by armed conflict, and noted the role that the United Nations Environment Programme could play, within its mandate, to support member States in addressing these challenges upon request,

Expressing its grave concern regarding pollution and environmental degradation caused by armed conflict or terrorism through the targeting of natural resources, vital civilian infrastructure, including water filtration facilities, sanitation and electricity networks, and residential properties,

Noting the long-term social and economic consequences of the degradation of the environment and natural resources resulting from pollution caused by armed conflict or terrorism, which include, inter alia, the loss of biodiversity, the loss of crops or livestock, and lack of access to clean water and agricultural land, and the negative and sometimes irreversible impacts on ecosystem services and their impact on sustainable recovery, contributing to further forced displacement related to environmental factors,

Noting also that the collapse of environmental governance in areas affected by conflict can lead to inadequate waste management and dumping, while the loss of economic opportunity can compel affected communities to pursue unsustainable and polluting coping strategies,

Taking into consideration the potential threat from, and far-reaching impact of, the movement of hazardous wastes, including persistent organic pollutants, over long distances in areas affected by armed conflict or terrorism,

Noting that the illicit extraction of natural resources and minerals in areas affected by armed conflict or terrorism can generate pollution and the displacement of people, in particular those in a vulnerable situation, especially women, children, persons with disabilities and older persons,

Stressing the need for the swift identification, assessment and remediation of pollution in the areas affected by armed conflict or terrorism in order to protect human health and the environment,

Welcoming with appreciation the work of the United Nations Environment Programme on the protection of the environment in areas affected by armed conflict or terrorism,

1. *Reaffirms* the rules of international law, including the Charter of the United Nations, human rights law and international humanitarian law, as applicable;

2. *Emphasizes* the need to raise greater international awareness of environmental damage and pollution resulting from armed conflict or terrorism;

3. *Urges* member States to take appropriate measures to minimize and control pollution in situations of armed conflict or terrorism;

4. *Stresses* the importance of preventing the pollution of rivers and water reserves with harmful substances as a result of armed conflict or terrorism;

5. *Invites* all member States, as appropriate and upon the request of the affected State, to cooperate closely in preventing, minimizing and mitigating the negative impacts of armed conflict or terrorism on the environment;

6. *Urges* all States affected by armed conflict or terrorism to encourage all stakeholders at the national level to participate in the preparation of national plans and strategies aimed at setting the priorities for environmental assessment and remediation projects, and to ensure that the data necessary for identifying health outcomes is collected and integrated into health registries and risk education programmes;

7. *Encourages* the Executive Director to continue undertaking field visits to affected areas, as appropriate and upon the invitation of the affected State;

8. *Requests* the Executive Director to dispatch urgent assistance missions to affected areas, as appropriate and upon the affected State's request, within available resources and in conformity with the mandate of the United Nations Environment Programme, in order to undertake field-based and post-crisis environmental assessment and recovery with a view to assisting affected States in controlling pollution resulting from armed conflict or terrorism;

9. *Also requests* the Executive Director, within available resources and in conformity with the Programme's mandate, to explore ways of improving the Programme's work on pollution threats arising from armed conflict or terrorism;

10. *Invites* United Nations offices, funds and programmes, specialized agencies and related organizations, other international organizations and relevant stakeholders to collaborate closely with the United Nations Environment Programme in providing technical assistance upon the request of States affected by pollution resulting from armed conflict or terrorism to implement international agreements on the environmentally sound management of chemicals and wastes and to help build effective environmental governance;

11. *Requests* the Executive Director to continue the Programme's interaction with the International Law Commission inter alia by providing relevant information to the Commission at its request in support of its work pertaining to pollution resulting from armed conflict or terrorism;

12. *Also requests* the Executive Director to report to the United Nations Environment Assembly at its fourth session on progress in the implementation of the present resolution.